

**LODI CITY COUNCIL
SPECIAL JOINT CITY COUNCIL MEETING
WITH THE DOWNTOWN LODI BUSINESS PARTNERSHIP
THE MERLOT, 23 WEST ELM STREET
TUESDAY, MAY 14, 2002**

A. CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

The Special Joint City Council meeting of the Lodi City Council and the Downtown Lodi Business Partnership (DLBP) was called to order by Mayor Pennino at 7:10 a.m.

Present: Council Members – Hitchcock, Howard, Nakanishi (arrived at 7:20 a.m. and left at 8:30 a.m.), and Mayor Pennino

Absent: Council Members – Land

Present: DLBP Board Members – Peter Westbrook, Dana Chapman, Tillie Easterling, Shawn Mazzanti, Chuck Higgs, Al Nunes, Rich Marini, Lew Van Buskirk, Phil Biddle, Lyle Johnson, and Greg Soligan

Absent: DLBP Board Members – Dev Thornton and Darrell Didreckson

Also Present: City Manager Flynn, Deputy City Manager Keeter, Economic Development Coordinator Goehring, Public Works Director Prima, Community Development Director Bartlam, City Attorney Hays, and Deputy City Clerk Taylor

B. TOPIC(S)

With the aid of overheads (filed) Peter Westbrook, DLBP President, presented in part the following information:

- The DLBP Board is actively focusing on a strong downtown team concept by communicating with its members, the Lodi District Chamber of Commerce, the City of Lodi, and the citizens of Lodi and the surrounding communities.
- Recent DLBP office improvements include new staff and technology, an outside bookkeeper, better communication, focus on events, an improved Web site, a newly formatted newsletter, and transferring billing and collection back to the City of Lodi.
- Last year's event successes and accomplishments included restoration of the Arch Bear, monetary donation to the Veteran's Memorial, Farmer's Market, Parade of Lights, Kiddie Parade, Downtown Lodi Live, Wine Stroll, Downtown Lighting, and improved parking.
- Improvements and changes in 2002/03 include cultivating existing events and introducing new events, creating a new format tabloid for advertising, expanding merchant hours to remain open for special events and theater traffic, completing the Downtown Decoration Program, and redistricting the downtown area to include the radius of Lodi Avenue, Sacramento Street, Church Street, and Locust Street into the downtown core. Additionally, the Board's focus is to expand its membership and volunteer base and improve communication to promote events and use of the new parking garage to customers, property owners, business owners, and staff.

Mr. Westbrook hosted a walking tour of the downtown area to highlight completed, ongoing, and future projects, as well as concerns such as the need for increased signage and the parking shortage for patrols due to the Hotel Lodi resident parking. He then continued his presentation at Tillie's Coffee, Tea, Etc., located at 21 West Pine Street, providing a summary of DLBP improvements and changes planned for 2002/03.

Mr. Westbrook requested City funding of \$100,000 for the 2002/03 budget to support \$60,000 for new events and \$40,000 for advertising and promotions, and suggested DLBP and the City of Lodi negotiate a new agreement. Additionally, the DLBP plans include allotting \$40,000 to complete the Decoration Project, turning over all current collection activities to City staff, and collecting reimbursement from the City of Lodi for billing/collection fees DLBP coordinated for 1998, 1999, and 2000.

Council Member Howard stated she appreciated the DLBP reviewing the fee policy and collection; that she enjoys the seasonal format of the Farmer's Market on Thursday nights and looks forward to attending; and she would encourage event partnerships with local churches, the Boys & Girls Club, Lodi Adopt-A-Child, and Lodi Lions Club. She suggested DLPB spread events throughout the week to encourage steady downtown traffic and stated her support of a program to utilize

space on additional floors of downtown structures to increase occupancy. Ms. Howard stated she is an advocate of building a parking structure near City Hall, sharing that she has observed congestion and traffic caused by Dial-A-Ride service at the Hotel Lodi. Ms. Howard stated she would support City of Lodi funding of \$60,000 this fiscal year for DLBP in addition to adopting a tiered structure wherein the City would decrease its annual support over four years to a sustained annual budget of \$25,000 as DLBP continues to grow and become self-sufficient.

Council Member Nakanishi stated the DLBP is doing a great job and he would continue to support its efforts with no budgetary increases, suggesting the Board explore additional funding through events and partnerships with other organizations.

Council Member Hitchcock shared that Michael Freedman, a member of the downtown revitalization design team, once commented that the decor and structure of the downtown should change every 25 feet to draw the public into stores and throughout the downtown area. She shared that he also said revitalization would cause an increase in foot traffic, downtown events, and shifting in property and business ownership style, which has happened. She shared that she was very impressed with an event in Chico entitled "Taste of Chico" and suggested DLBP members visit for ideas. Ms. Hitchcock stated she was not an advocate of a second parking structure near City Hall, and shared that many cities support and promote their city's downtown and revitalization efforts. She stated she would support a fee structure or an incentive program of a TOT tax side agreement wherein successful promotions would provide rewards. Ms. Hitchcock stated she hoped that while DLBP and the Chamber are working together, their directions remain diverse to provide a variety of services and opportunities for businesses in the downtown and greater Lodi area.

Mayor Pennino stated he was glad to see the DLBP Board's progress and vision, and encouraged the board to contact Council directly for future proposals and support. He stated that as a long-time advocate of downtown revitalization, he receives many positive comments on the area and believes a consultant should be hired to begin the next phase of revitalization, which he sees as extending across the tracks to include Stockton and Washington Streets. He shared that increasing downtown occupancy through the use of additional floors within structures would increase Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards, possibly providing opportunities for low-interest development. Further, Mayor Pennino stressed the importance of businesses operating during evening hours and special events, and stated that addressing parking issues should be postponed until adequate signage is in place and the impact of the new parking garage can be evaluated.

City Manager Flynn thanked the DLBP for sharing its operating accomplishments and goals for future fundraisers, increased membership, and continued growth. He stated that the DLBP must be successful and that the City must play a part in ensuring this happens. Mr. Flynn thanked Pat Patrick for his efforts in working with DLBP on common goals and interests, and extended his gratitude to City of Lodi staff members who work with DLBP on downtown issues and special events. He suggested DLBP consider offering downtown and Lodi businesses an opportunity to participate as vendors for events prior to bringing in out-of-town businesses.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

- Pat Patrick, Lodi District Chamber of Commerce, stated he has seen great focus by the DLBP Board of Directors, but voiced concern over an expansion and additional assessment, noting that the last time fees were raised for the revitalization the Chamber lost about 100 members. Mr. Patrick stated the many volunteers who work to put on two street fairs each year are not interested in hosting more of these events. He commented that the last Chamber Wine Stroll hosted in conjunction with the DLBP generated a few new members to the Chamber of Commerce.

D. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the City Council, the meeting was adjourned at 9:00 a.m.

ATTEST:

Jacqueline L. Taylor, Deputy City Clerk